



Transitional Demobilization and Reintegration Program

The Drivers of Reporter Reintegration in Northern Uganda

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Themes/Key Words

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Abstract

Reintegration is a two way process and involves the reintegration of reporters and communities together. Reporters navigate physical and symbolic terrain to re-enter their communities and are faced with complex economic and social barriers. While confirming some general dynamics of reintegration, this study draws attention to the heterogeneity of the reporter population. It also shows how this heterogeneity informs the degree to which reporters successfully reintegrate, the paths they take to do so, and the design of possible future operations.

Some drivers of reintegration are not directly linked to formal DDR processes:

- **Kinship networks:** They enable reporters to resettle, facilitate interactions with the general community, and can provide immediate material support and longer term economic support. But they can also negatively affect reintegration by misappropriating reinsertion payments, stigmatizing and deliberately excluding reporters from their family.
- **Access to assets and credit:** Access to family assets (land, informal credit or business/livelihood strategies), and reporters' own assets (prior to their time in the rebellion).
- **Diversification of livelihood strategies:** reporters who have the capacity to

diversify beyond agriculture appear to be better reintegrated. Those who have diversified into trading usually have been enabled to do so through access to informal micro-finance or credit in their family.

- **Education and training:** the negative influence of poor literacy and numeracy is wide and can limit the ability to acquire a vocational skill or effectively and independently manage cash-flow.

Two factors greatly influence reintegration: **gender** (female reporters face far more reintegration challenges based on cultural and traditional gender dynamics) and **market conditions** (severe development challenges mean that reporters often cannot use their skills because of the absence or lack of market demand.)

The drivers of reintegration that are directly linked to formal DDR processes are:

- Reporters' experience during **reception**, which drives the political reintegration.
- **Time in the rebellion** (the longer the time, the more likely it may negatively influence reintegration).
- **Reinsertion packages**, which help to meet immediate needs and to establish longer-term income generating activities.
- **Vocational training**, which could be complemented or enhanced by community-based interventions.

- Treatment for **chronic pain and ongoing rehabilitation**, both physical and psychosocial, which contribute to reporters being better able to have an income generating activity and take steps towards reintegration.
- Treatment of **vulnerable groups**, particularly female reporters.
- Issues of **gender-based violence**, a prevalent aspect of the marginalization of female reporters.
- **Citizenship, government and social awareness training**, to ensure that political reintegration does not lag behind social and economic reintegration.

